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As a result of a request by textbook publishers for a list of suggested instruction materials to meet the needs of youth in large urban centers, the committee on instructional materials has developed illustrative guidelines for the selection of content for both elementary and secondary urban school texts. One major consideration was the need for materials depicting realistic situations in urban areas. Basically, textbooks and materials must be concerned with the diversity of people who make up urban society; the highly mobile and transient population; the differences in social and economic status; and the changes in economic, educational, political, social, and family life. A second need is for concern about the pluralistic nature of society in urban areas. Materials should avoid emphasizing the separateness of minorities when attempting to recognize their special needs. Reference should be made to the cultural and ethnic groups as they arise naturally in the society and should indicate appreciation for their contributions and achievements without undue emphasis. Identification of urban young people with events and people depicted in American History is another need. Textbooks must find imaginative ways to present the American past for those handicapped by limitations of environment so that they may feel a part of ongoing American history. Finally, instructional materials need to help develop vital skills of communication. Teachers need specific suggestions for teaching literature, reading and listening skills, and for improving speech.					
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**instructional materials
to meet the needs
of urban youth**

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**ILLUSTRATIVE GUIDELINES
FOR SELECTION OF CONTENT
OF INSTRUCTIONAL MATERIALS
DESIGNED TO MEET THE NEEDS
OF URBAN YOUTH**

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THE RESEARCH COUNCIL OF THE
GREAT CITIES PROGRAM
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INTRODUCTION

During a joint meeting of the Committee on Instructional Materials and of the Liaison Committee of the American Textbook Publishers Institute held in Chicago on June 3, 1964, publisher representatives requested a list of suggested instructional materials, enumerated by topic and grade level, to meet the needs of youth residing in large urban centers. In response, the Committee on Instructional Materials developed the following illustrative guidelines for the selection of content of such materials for use in both urban elementary and secondary schools which were accepted by official action of the Research Council, November 4, 1964. It must be emphasized, however, that these guidelines are merely possible suggestions which might be used in the preparation of instructional materials. In no way should they be regarded as a directive, nor as an overall plan for all schools, districts, and communities throughout the country. There has been no attempt to develop a basic framework or subject matter content nor to specify the grade levels at which the content should be taught. However, the suggestions have been listed in a progressive order on the basis of increasing pupil maturity for use in grade levels where they would seem most applicable.

CONSIDERATIONS IN SELECTION OF CONTENT

Among the considerations in the selection of content and the approach of textbooks and instructional materials are the following:

- Need for materials depicting realistic situations in urban areas.

Basically, textbooks and instructional materials must be concerned with the diversity of people who make up the society in urban areas, the highly mobile and transient population, the differences in social and economic status between the different groups in each community, and the changes in economic, educational, political, social and family life.

- Concern for the pluralistic nature of society in urban areas. Big cities, by the very nature of their complexity, represent

many different groups of people who must unite their efforts toward strengthening their community, city, state, and nation, rather than become compartmentalized into divisive cultures.

Materials of instruction should avoid emphasizing the separateness of minorities when attempting to recognize their special needs. The materials should include references to cultural and ethnic groups as they arise naturally in descriptions of the overall urban community and should indicate appreciation for their contributions and achievements without undue emphasis.

- Concern for the identification of urban young people with events and people depicted in American history.

There is a pressing national need to stimulate new thinking about imaginative ways of presenting the American past for those who are handicapped by limitations of environment and beset with the problems which arise from differences in social class or racial background.

The young person in the sprawling urban complex needs to see himself as part of ongoing American history. An awareness of the part played in history by people like himself can help him in this identification.

- Need for materials to help develop vital skills of communication.

Materials are needed which provide specific suggestions for teaching literature, reading skills, and listening skills, and which will contribute to speech improvement. There is a need to understand the characteristics of the young people who use these materials.

ORGANIZATION

The suggestions in this report express the point of view of the members of the Committee on Instructional Materials and include examples of needed instructional materials. The suggestions and examples represent possible guidelines for the content of materials and have been listed in a progressive order on the basis of increasing pupil maturity rather than by grade levels. The illustrative guidelines for the selection of content apply to Kindergarten and Grades 1-12.

SOCIAL STUDIES MATERIALS, K-12 URBAN AREAS

Contemporary and Realistic Aspects of an Urban Society and the Continual Change That Is Part of That Society

Change and mobility require that all individuals must be capable of adjustment in the society; that they learn that change is natural and that it may involve basic alterations in their lives.

- Include situations that show ways in which people live and work together in an urban community and the community services that help a community function.

- Use the problem-solving approach (as one method) to help pupils learn about the urban complex. For example, pupils may study about the way in which big cities solve the problem of providing adequate water supplies. Such an undertaking would involve finding information about:

Population density

Proper utilization of natural resources

Physical environment and water sources

Uses of water in industrial development

- Utilize contemporary situations to describe urban problems, such as population movements, population make-up, and differences in cultures.
- Point out the social problems created by the growth in the exercise of civil rights in newly integrated neighborhoods.
- Provide realistic treatment of the problems faced by the high school student when he enters the adult world in a newly integrated neighborhood.
- Describe the events leading to the passage of civil rights laws and the problems still to be faced in discrimination in housing, employment, recreation, and the use of public facilities.
- Help the pupil apply the principles of critical thinking to the choices he must make between violence and civil disobedience and the orderly legislative processes in solving the problems of discrimination.

Complexity of Urban Areas as Groups of Communities and Neighborhoods

The need to belong is difficult to satisfy in a megalopolis. Young people should receive help in developing an understanding of the causes of rootlessness: occupational transiency; economic instability; lack of identification with the city; problems arising from short-term acquaintances; and the resultant disinterest in community needs.

- Guide pupils in the study of various kinds of neighborhoods and community settings, such as areas of single-family dwellings, multiple-family dwellings, neighborhood shops, shopping centers, small business establishments, office buildings, and schools.
- Build concepts from the immediate environment to the larger community through teaching about the interrelationships of communities, such as transportation networks of streets, roads, and freeways; transportation of goods and raw materials in a variety of ways between communities; and the relationship of neighborhoods and communities to the metropolitan center.
- Help the young person extend his interest and involvement beyond the family and immediate neighborhood by showing his role in the city as a whole and his importance to the entire community.
- Expand concepts of the urban area as a megalopolis of residential areas, business and industrial areas, and manufacturing centers to develop understandings about: Development of urban centers through urban renewal projects.

Common problems of urban centers, such as traffic, utility services and protection of health and property. Relationship of suburbs and rural communities to metropolitan center.

Economic factors relating to production of goods, the market, financial operations, and policies concerned with public welfare.

- Point out the function of youth organizations and agencies in helping the pupil develop a sense of usefulness, worth, and belonging.
- Describe the conflicts arising in the young person who

must adapt to new friends, standards, values, and goals; and provide positive suggestions for the solution of the problem of rootlessness, identifying community workers and agencies available for assistance.

- Show that the student may experience many failures in achieving identification before even small success is achieved and that some problems require long-range rather than short-range efforts.
- Indicate how gang and club activities may be positively directed in efforts to improve the neighborhood, to participate in constructive community endeavors, and to make responsible use of recreational facilities.
- Show that the young people in the high school age group can exert a positive influence on younger children without being regarded as weaklings.

Diverse Backgrounds of Groups Living in the Urban Complex

Young people need to understand that society in an urban complex consists of many elements. They must be made aware of its existence, strengths, shortcomings, and contributions. To this end, students must learn to accept the existence of differing sets of values, to understand and avoid stereotypes, and to recognize the common goals of all elements of a pluralistic society, despite the diversity of races, religions, and cultures.

- Begin to develop understandings of the many different kinds of family structures in a multi-racial society, such as: Wholesome family life in two-parent and one-parent families; home environment when both parents are working. Relationship of children to persons other than parents who may be responsible for them, including grandparents, housekeepers, and baby sitters. Responsibilities in the home.
- Develop appreciation for the achievements and contributions of members of cultural and ethnic minorities through reading of biographies, vignettes, stories, and use of illustrations.
- Describe the pluralistic make-up of a megalopolis, exploring the development of cultural pockets or islands and noting the contributions and the problems which are

created. Point out that:

Neighborhoods are occupied by particular cultural groups and some of the specific customs evidenced in shops, foods, newspapers, and traditions.

It is important for people to work together. The community gains greater strength when people of different backgrounds unify their efforts in communities and cities.

- Emphasize the interdependence of people living in large urban complexes and show how our life is constantly being enriched by the influences of other cultures, traditions, and the heritage of the past.

- Portray honestly the problems created by prejudice and discrimination and the ways in which the young person can recognize them and work to overcome them.

- Show how a young person can help to overcome distrust, fear, and discrimination by living up to the best in his culture and by acting responsibly in both the immediate and total communities.

- Prepare supplementary materials which provide a coordinated anthropological and sociological approach to the problems of urban life.

Desirable Attitudes Toward and Respect for the Law and for Those Persons Who Have the Responsibility to Enforce the Law

The need to develop respect for the law as a cornerstone of society is of particular concern to responsible citizens and leaders in a megalopolis. Growing lawlessness and hostility toward law-enforcement officials must be countered by emphasis on the positive, protective role of the law and reliance on lawful group action.

- Develop understanding of and respect for those persons who have responsibilities for maintaining law and order, safeguarding health and safety, and developing the character of youth, such as: policemen, school personnel, probation officers and welfare workers, religious leaders, and leaders of youth clubs.
- Stress the need for law and law enforcement in maintaining a stable and secure society, and increase appreciation for the orderly process of law through

development of understanding of the reasons for rules and laws.

- Help the pupil to recognize that resentment of law enforcement represents rebellion against authority in general and that such an attitude endangers society.
- Show the need to resist peer group pressures when they contribute to violation of standards of behavior accepted by the community, and indicate positive activities which can provide wholesome outlets for the group.
- Illustrate the constructive roles of government and law in such fields as labor, traffic, health and sanitation, and licensing regulations.
- Contrast use of the orderly democratic process in solving problems and changing laws with the unpredictable, always dangerous use of extralegal action by groups such as the Ku Klux Klan, vigilante organizations, mobs, and rioters.
- Introduce the study of the psychological causes and effects of mob action to help young people recognize and guard against such manifestations in themselves and others and to act more rationally.

Occupational Opportunities Available in the Urban Area and the Need for Skills and Training

Young people need to develop a recognition of and appreciation for the dignity of all honest labor and of the satisfaction gained from a job well done. The urban complex, with its greater specializations and the lack of identification of an employee with the finished product, makes this goal difficult to attain. All young people, especially those of cultural minorities living in large urban areas, need to learn and experience the satisfaction of a job well done and to appreciate its significance as a contribution to the community in which they live.

- Provide material about persons who use skills and training to perform work in the immediate community such as:

Storekeeper, Salesman, Clerk, Barber, Engineer, Lawyer, Repairman, Bank Teller, Visiting Nurse, Teacher, Beautician, Doctor, Businessman, Bus Driver, Newsboy, Policeman, Fireman, Milkman, Librarian.

- Provide information about occupational opportunities, the training needed to take advantage of them, the value of developing talent and special abilities, and the importance of education.
- Describe persons in various levels of occupations who do their work so well that they are in constant demand.
- Point out actual situations in which faulty workmanship has resulted in failure or disaster.
- Help students to examine their goals in life and to begin to discriminate between false and real values, ideas of status, and conceptions of success.
- Show how job opportunities increase for the young person who is properly trained and prepared and who has set high standards of workmanship and achievement for himself.
- Reinforce the importance of preparation and training to young people of minority groups in seeking job opportunities which have opened to them because of progress in civil rights.
- Present evidence that opportunities in self-employment exist for young people of initiative who are responsible, well-trained, and unafraid of long hours of hard work; point out that rewards, nonmonetary as well as monetary, may be great in self-employment.
- Stress the need for all individuals to assume roles in society as competent, self-supporting, and self-realizing adults.
- Illustrate that retraining becomes necessary as old jobs are replaced by new ones requiring different skills.

AMERICAN HISTORY

The urban child, growing up in a large city environment, has difficulty in identifying himself with the events and the people depicted in American history. For large numbers of urban children, particularly those who are members of cultural minorities, American history must be made more meaningful, with greater stress upon the fact that history is made by all peoples. Materials are needed that:

- Deal with leaders of minority groups who have made real contributions to the scientific, political, and social

development of our country, and which thus help members of these groups develop pride in their ancestry.

- Help the pupil to develop pride in his own country; understanding and appreciation of the American heritage, its traditions, and the many people who have contributed to the democratic way of life; and a respect for the innate worth and dignity of all human beings.
- Show the part played in United States history by our national leaders; by the "less-than-epic" heroes, such as reformers, social workers, civic leaders, inventors, teachers, scientists, and artists; and by the other people from every walk of life who make up the community.
- Point out the roles in American history of prominent and famous people from all ethnic groups.
- Provide due consideration of well-known contemporary figures who have transcended minority group barriers and with whom minority group youngsters can relate and accept as models upon which to base their own behavior.
- Describe contributions of lesser-known persons of ethnic and cultural minorities who have served their country.
- Develop an appreciation of all nations, without a loss of devotion to American ideals of democracy, by providing biographical accounts of heroes of other nations as well as American leaders.
- Provide accurate and frank portrayals of current problems and changing conditions as influences in shaping the future.

COMMUNICATION SKILLS MATERIALS, K-12 READING

Background Information Concerning Special Reading Needs

The problem of teaching culturally deprived or culturally different pupils to read arises from several causes. Current literature refers to such factors as the following:

- Reading is not prized in the home. (In some sections of the nation, even in cities, home deliveries of daily papers are made to 25 per cent or less of the population.)
- Many adults over 25 years of age have completed no years

of school; great numbers of others have completed four years or less. Children in families with such backgrounds do not associate with anyone whom they value who uses books, magazines, or newspapers as a regular part of his life.

- Connected discourse (conversation) is all but unknown to many children. Martin Deutsch points out that words and phrases constitute the only verbal diet familiar to large numbers of boys and girls in the poorest sections of cities. These children have had no preschool experience with the expression of abstractions. Discourse at home has been a series of directions, instructions, and expletives delivered with the greatest possible economy.
- It is important that materials for these pupils be written by persons who understand current urban conditions and the cultural backgrounds of minorities.

Literature: Fiction, Drama, Poetry, Articles

Suggestions for Reading Levels

There should be a variation of reading levels so that material is available for children who represent a range of reading abilities. Some materials are needed for junior high schools with reading levels from second to fifth grade and for senior high schools with reading levels from second to eighth grade. However, the need for reading materials of this type does not mean there should be a lack of sophistication in content. Often subject matter of considerable maturity can be handled in easy-reading books. It is also desirable for books and stories to be short.

Suggestions for Content

- The content of reading materials should more adequately reflect the lives and characteristics of the young people who use them to learn to read. Clinical psychologists and psychiatrists should be consulted in determining the kind of image with which deprived or otherwise different children can identify, or at least not reject; then characters of this type should be depicted in pupil materials. Both the

language and ideas expressed in the content of readers need to be considered. The speech patterns and actual vocabulary used in real-life situations should be utilized in the content of the readers.

- Young people usually are more interested in books which portray life situations like their own and which, therefore, seem real. They are less interested in an unfamiliar, seemingly artificial society and way of living, but a few themes are so exciting that unfamiliar settings are acceptable. These include adventure, the struggle for survival, and life on the frontier.
- The success story, or "Horatio Alger" narrative, will appeal to pupils of low socioeconomic status if presented in a realistic contemporary context. Books of this kind can help raise pupils' aspirations, and thus aid "high horizons" programs.
- If a book arouses a genuine emotional response in the reader, it may help modify his attitudes, values, and behavior. Overt preaching or didacticism, however, will defeat its own purpose.
- The content of books for teenagers, from the upper elementary school grades through senior high school, should have strong and immediate appeal. Some specific suggestions include:

For all boys: Adventure, danger, survival, athletics, animals

For all girls: Dating, jobs for girls, school activities, mysteries

For both boys and girls: Science fiction, mystery and detective stories, humor

For high school boys: Jobs, cars, military service, dating

- Wherever appropriate, the reader should have an opportunity to make value judgments based on realistic behavior of characters, and his sympathies and emotions should be stirred in desirable directions. Success in modifying a reader's attitudes, judgments, values, and actions through literature depends on the emotional impact of the writing, the genuineness of the situations portrayed,

and the skill in presentation. Overt moralizing may seem "corny" to young readers.

Suggestions for Setting and Characters

- Stories usually should have the central part of a big city as their setting. Suburban settings sometimes should be used, but less often than in current teenage literature. In addition, exciting adventures with settings in outer space, in Alaska, on the American Frontier, and under water are acceptable.
- Some stories should take place in segregated, one-race neighborhoods and some in integrated, multiethnic neighborhoods. In books about multiethnic neighborhoods, it is especially important to avoid stereotyping. There should be some intergroup friction, some intergroup friendliness, and some friction between members of the same ethnic group. Intergroup relations may sometimes be the main theme of stories, especially in those with settings in changing neighborhoods, but should more often be used as background for a plot which is not concerned with intergroup relations.
- In materials prepared for pupils in upper elementary school grades and junior and senior high schools, characters portrayed should be adolescents or adults, but not young children.
- Characters should sometimes live in multiple dwellings, tenements, housing projects, and rundown one-family houses; less frequently, they should live in homes representing high-income levels.
- The tendency to stereotype the "middle class" and "middle-class values" should be avoided. The socioeconomic status of the main characters should usually be of the lower-lower and upper-lower classes, occasionally of the lower-middle class, and much less frequently of the upper class. Poverty, moonlighting, homes in which both parents are working, the matriarchal home, unemployment, and seasonal employment, as well as prosperity and regular employment, sometimes should be depicted.

- Home life of people in low socioeconomic groups often should be depicted as wholesome, although *not because* of deprivation. Some one-parent homes should be presented. Both the hardships and the wholesomeness which characterize such homes should be portrayed.
- Some "success stories" about characters who have risen socially, economically, or culturally are desirable. Again, preaching should be avoided.
- Adult characters in stories should usually be blue collar workers portrayed with admiration; they sometimes should be unskilled or semiskilled workers portrayed without condescension; sometimes they should be highly-skilled workers or business or professional men.
- Minority group members should occupy a variety of economic and vocational levels, including the highest. In some stories, they should be self-employed or own their own businesses, and demonstrate pride in their independence.
- At every vocational level, persons should be portrayed as feeling pride of workmanship and as accepting the dignity of labor of all types.
- Socioeconomic background and vocational status should be sketched in subtly, without preaching or didacticism.
- Minority group members should be main characters at times and often should be minor characters. Stereotypes must be avoided.

Suggestions for Themes and Plots

- Some underlying themes which have strong appeal are the need to belong to a group, the need to be accepted by peers, the need to succeed at something, the need to believe that the individual is important, and the need to feel satisfied about the status of parents.
- Stories may sometimes portray intergroup prejudice and may deal with the current civil rights activities. The treatment should be candid and realistic but fair and not sensationalized.
- Stories might sometimes show effects of automation on adults in such ways as job loss or fear of job loss; they may

also portray the effects of changes in work technology in such ways as the need to retrain, to take night school courses, or to move to a new locality.

- Plots may sometimes revolve around problems resulting from change, such as the following:

Change of housing because of slum clearance or freeway built through residential section.

New neighbor who comes from another state or nation, or who is a member of another ethnic group.

New job in large, impersonal plant rather than in small neighborhood business.

- Plots may sometimes involve dropouts as main or minor characters. The frustrations, resentments, emotional disturbances, and negative attitudes toward teachers and toward education should be shown from the dropout's point of view. The hardships faced by dropouts should be indicated without exaggeration or didacticism. No easy, unrealistic solutions should be proposed.
- Unfinished problem stories ending with a question to be resolved might create interest and motivate discussion.
- Plots may sometimes involve realistic attitudes of adolescents toward law enforcement officers. They should, in general, be shown performing difficult and dangerous duties as part of the day's work, but the officers should not be pictured as paragons of heroism.
- Delinquents should not be glorified. On the other hand, they should not be *preached* against; if there is any sermon, it should take the form of presenting cause and effect.

Suggestions for Follow-Up Materials

- Lengthy sections, describing follow-up activities or study guides are undesirable, although very brief guides may help pupils to think about what they have read. It is well to avoid deadening pupils' enjoyment by assigning unpleasant tasks after each reading.

Reading Skills Development

- Materials are needed for systematic development of both word recognition and comprehension skills. Reading skills

for pupils of junior and senior high school age are the same as those taught in elementary schools. Such skills form the framework for any good basal reading series. However, secondary school pupils who are retarded in reading should be provided with practice exercises of adolescent or adult maturity. Pamphlets of workbook size or paperbacks with adult format are more desirable than large, thick books for pupils in this age group.

SPEECH IMPROVEMENT MATERIALS FOR CULTURALLY DIFFERENT PUPILS

Suggestions for Materials for Pupils in Elementary Schools

- Linguistic barriers present one of the major handicaps to instruction of the in-migrant, the child in a home where a foreign language is spoken, and the child of parents who retain foreign-language idioms despite assimilation of and into the local culture.
- Children of these types approach reading with a foreign or regional set of equivalents for our various orthographic symbols. To some children, our symbol *r* calls forth a response which is actually "ah." From their experience, other children will produce an *er* sound for our "one-dot a," as in idea.
- After children have been sensitized to and familiarized with the discrepancies of the sounds which they hear at home (or in the home they left to come to the city) and with the sounds which they hear the teacher producing, they then should be able to read with much greater speed than is now possible.
- Practice materials of some type, preferably consisting of pictures with some additional nonverbal stimulus, are needed to help children acquire both the pattern (grammar or structure) and the pronunciation used by the people in the community where they reside. This will be a difficult and expensive task, since the materials need to be prepared in terms of at least the broad phonetic elements representative of the geographic areas from which major cities obtain their populations.

Suggestions for Materials for Pupils in Junior and Senior High Schools

- It has been suggested that a series of exercises, with related tapes, records, and other types of materials, be designed to develop articulate responses of young people. The exercises should provide practice in acceptable American-English pronunciation, enunciation, intonation, and speaking rhythm.
- Colloquial expressions might be "translated" into standard American-English with no insinuation that the language used by the pupils and their parents is inferior. It is important that pupils learn that there are different American dialects and that most communication in school and business is conducted in standard American-English.
- Techniques similar to those used in developing materials for teaching a foreign language might be utilized. Communication, facility in the use of language, fluency in articulation, and improvement of speech patterns should be emphasized. Interesting and realistic situations of appropriate maturity should be depicted in the content.

LISTENING SKILLS DEVELOPMENT

- There is need for books (with related tapes or disks) for use in training young people to listen. The kinds of exercises and follow-up materials for this instruction should be very much like those used to improve reading skills.
- The subject matter of tape recordings used for listening practice should be mature enough for adolescents and deal with topics of interest to urban youth, as indicated in the preceding section on *Literature*.
- There is also need for materials which will help pupils to be critical of exaggerated or false claims of advertisers and propagandists and which will teach young people to resist incitements to disorder.

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